item which appeared in the Asian Age dated 3rd May, 2002, that the Swiss Government with the help of Interpol has launched a major drive to clamp down on what they call, "dirty money";

(b) if so, what is the estimated total amount of such money belonging to Indians, including NGOs., institutions, corporates and other entities; and

(c) what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) to (c) The Government is aware of the news-item. However, no such information about Rs. 2500 crore in Swiss Banks, as reported in the news-item, is available with any of the investigating agencies.

Strengthening of Financial Institutions

1418. SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the quality of appraisal and due diligence by the public sector financial institutions needs to be strengthened to ensure that in case of default by the borrowers, the securities given by them are easily encashable; and

(b) whether Government propose to issue any fresh guidelines in this behalf in order to strengthen the foundation of the financial system?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE): (a) Financial Institutions (FIs) have reported that they have, over the years, strengthened their risk assessment capability and built a project appraisal system. The appraisal process involves a thorough analysis of the feasibility report submitted by the borrower company and detailed examination of various project contracts/ agreements. The appraisal team also undertakes site visits to physically assess the reasonableness of cost of land and site development and also to assess the availability of infrastructural facilities. In large infrastructure projects, in order to safeguard the interest of lelnders, reputed technical consultants are appointed as Lelnders' Engineer to review various techno-commercial aspects of the project including project cost.

As regards encashing of securities given by the borrower, on 21st June 2002 Government have promulgated an ordinance "The Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Securities Interest Ordinance, 2002" to facilitate foreclosure and enforcement of securities in cases of default and to enable the banks and financial institutions to realize their dues.

(b) RBI issues guidelines, from time to time, for strengthening the financial system.

New Recruitment in Nationalised Banks

†1419. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of the employees retired so far under voluntary retirement scheme in the nationalised banks, bank-wise;

(b) the names of the nationalised banks which have started recruitment due to shortage of employees; and

(c) the total number of employees to be recruited in each nationalised bank?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE): (a) A statement showing bank-wise number of employees relieved under Voluntary Retirement Scheme up to 31st March, 2002 is enclosed (*See below*).

(b) and (c) The objective of Voluntary Retirement Scheme (VRS) was to right-size the manpower in banks. Salient features of theVRS, *inter alia*, provided that there would be no recruitment against vacancies arising due to VRS. Before introducing VRS, banks were to complete their manpower planning and identify the number of officers/employees who could be considered for being relieved under the Scheme. Banks can, therefore, now make fresh recruitment as per the Manpower Plan keeping in view their requirements as also normal wastages caused due to retirements, resignations, deaths, etc.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.